



G.I. Gurdjieff's sayings on Religion

There are not three, not twenty, not even two, religions. There is simply Religion.

True religion is always and everywhere the same - it is one and unique.

The name of religion is given today to a sect that yesterday was regarded as heretical.

“The essence of all the religions you’ve mentioned is the same,” affirmed Mr. Gurdjieff. “Fundamentally, they are all concerned with only one thing - evolution. The teaching of each great master enables his pupils to follow a certain evolutionary path, and to arrive at a level where contact with the highest cosmic force becomes possible. At their root, all the teachings are one and the same, each having as its purpose to help us attain this possibility.”

Religions are actually like mathematics: it is the elementary part, the most exoteric, that is offered to the masses, and this elementary part differs according to the religion. It is because a Messiah or Messenger from

Above appears among people who differ in language, philosophical outlook, character, fundamental mentality, and many other temporal aspects, that he has to adapt to the times and choose an appropriate way to accomplish his task.

There also exists a 'fourth way', based on the sacred impulse emanating from Conscience, of which a germ is deposited in each human being. This way leads to another specific form of teaching, a new approach to Religion.

Anyone would have to admit that almost no one knows the true essence of his own religion, yet everyone believes he can judge all the others.

Only he who has succeeded by persistent and conscious efforts in freeing himself from the chaos resulting from his own lack of consciousness can be aware of what Religion really means.

Only conscious work is worthy of a genuine Christian, he said.

Every living being must work in order to eat. It is a great law of nature. But the man who works only to feed himself is nothing but an animal. To work as a Christian requires a super-effort in order to consciously approach an aim that is beyond one's reach.

Only that person is worthy to be a follower of any religion who, although he remembers the wrong done to him by someone, will not manifest any evil toward him.

Faith is the knowledge of feeling, 'knowledge of the heart'.

Christianity forbids murder. Yet all that the whole of our progress comes to is progress in the technique of murder and progress in warfare. How can we call ourselves Christians?

He who desires the truth will not speak of love or of Christianity because he knows how far he is from these.

Someone spoke about studying the ideas in other religions. He said that it is far better to study one's own machine than to read about ideas.

All religious teachings, excepting of course the completely degenerated religions of savages and the invented religions and sects of modern times, consist of two parts, the visible and the hidden.

Religion says believe, and uses words like love, hope, faith. I say to you, believe nothing, trust nothing, hope for nothing, love nothing. Yet I am a very religious man.

If you learn to obey Inner God, this is a thousand times better than the Ten Commandments, which only tell us how to live, but cannot help a man to work.

In another conversation (or rather it was part of the one about the Inner God), he spoke of the Ten Commandments. They cannot help a man to work. But if he listens to his Inner God, then he has something a thousand times greater than the Ten Commandments.

G spoke the other day about hell and said, "It is only terrible for the first few days".

"I do not speak of pseudoreligions," he said. "There are four real religions - the Christian Church, Roman and Orthodox, the Moslem faith, the Hebraic faith, and the Brahmanic religion."

Man cannot change his religion because religion is conscience.

Religion for some is useful, for others policeman.

[Kanari says Bible called them God's chosen people.] God not interest such business. Always among many idiots, one super-idiot exists, he more idiot than ordinary, therefore he is super center of gravity. In this case Moses was such. He was center of gravity of Jewish people and *he* make them chosen, not God.

What you learn from bible you wish believe, but your bible is one thing and my bible is quite another.

Nobody now believe in Christian thing, not with inner world, especially young ones. Nobody but English old maid and your American Lesbians. In General, man over there not believe. Your bible is hodgepodge.

Even your religion - western religion - have this phrase "Know thyself". This phrase most important in all religions.

These Old Testament stories can be more important than all the words of Jesus Christ.

Whoever does not love life does not love God.

Man not know his own nose and at same time wish to know God's tail.

When God sleeps is the only time the devil is free to do what he wishes, for good or for evil.

Accustom yourself interior to be very quiet and to see sincerely and with affection your father, your mother. Objectively, they are more than God. God himself said: As long as your father and mother live, I do not exist for you.

The unique parasite, do you know who he is? Our God. In the world everyone is a parasite. The only person who is not - our esteemed Mullah Nassr Eddin. He is impartial.

But while for some people religion serves as guidance, for others it is only a policeman. Christ, too, was a magician, a man of Knowledge. He was not God, or rather He was God, but on a certain level.

In the beginning Catholicism was very good, but then not. They searched for midday at two o'clock; they diluted everything. In the beginning it was superior to the Orthodox religion and to all others.

There is nothing new in the idea of sleep. People have been told almost since the creation of the world that they are asleep and that they must awaken. How many times is this said in the Gospels, for instance? 'Awake,' 'watch,' 'sleep not.' Christ's disciples even slept when he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane for the last time.

Every real religion, that is, one that has been created by learned people for a definite aim, consists of two parts. One part teaches what is to be done. This part becomes common knowledge and in the course of time is distorted and departs from the original. The other part teaches how to do what the first part teaches. This part is preserved in secret in special schools and with its help it is always possible to rectify what has been distorted in the first part or to restore what has been forgotten.

Real love is the basis of all, the foundations, the Source. The religions have perverted and deformed love. It was by love that Jesus performed miracles. Real love joined with magnetism. All accumulated vibrations create a current. This current brings the force of love. Real love is a cosmic force which goes through us. If we crystallize it, it becomes a power—the greatest power in the world. Later you will study magnetism in books, no matter which, it will give you material. And with love as a basis, you will be able to cure paralytics and make the blind see.

This is one aspect of religious morality - what religion teaches. Religion is morality. Morality in English is for you big word, in Russian we have two words; one means morality, ordinary, such as we speak of now - other also means morality but more strong. It means opposite of shameless. Objective shame, this man must have.

The majority of religions live, act, believe in accordance with holy scriptures, precepts and commandments.

At the same time there has existed a teaching of learned followers who have tried to put into practice all religions, all sayings, all teachings without infatuation, without faith. They did not worship blindly. Before accepting something they practiced it. What could be put into practice was accepted, what could not be was rejected. In this way a new religion was formed, although the material for it was taken from other religions. The teaching about which I speak now is the teaching of the Sufis. This teaching says the following about the angel and the devil: every action of a man, every step, every moment, every movement emanates either

from the one or from the other. Emanations from both (result) are equally deposited in the human organism in the form of certain crusts of real tangible matter which one can examine and distinguish whether the crust is of one kind or another. Each crust obeys certain laws, leads to certain consequences.

And in the case of man things whispered by the devil have a greater effect.

He said that time was very short—it was necessary to achieve this harmony as soon as possible to avoid complete disaster. Philosophies, religions and other such movements had all failed to accomplish this aim, and the only possible way to accomplish it was through the individual development of man. As an individual developed his own, unknown potentialities, he would become strong and would, in turn, influence many more people. He added, grimly, that he was in no sense joking when he had said that time was short. Further, he said that history had already proven to us that such tools as politics, religion, and any other organized movements which treated man "in the mass" and not as individual beings, were failures. That they would always be failures and that the separate, distinct growth of each individual in the world was the only possible solution.

Compiled by Amar Shamo

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amarshamo@web.de